

**Written Testimony Supporting  
Proposed House Bill 7285, An Act Concerning Complaints That Allege Misconduct By Law  
Enforcement Agency Personnel**

Senator Doyle, Senator Kissel, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Sean Hannon, and I am a resident of Weston, Connecticut. I am here to testify in support of Proposed House Bill 7285, which intends to ensure compliance with the provisions of section 7-294bb of the Connecticut general statutes concerning the acceptance, processing, and investigation of a complaint from a member of the public relating to alleged misconduct committed by law enforcement agency personnel.

My father was an officer in the Los Angeles Police Department in the early 1960s, and so he was personally familiar with all sides of it, the good, the bad and the ugly. He experienced the divide between police and the community it served, and he fought to change the culture of a department that needed to change with the times. After more than 50 years, some of the same distrust between officers and community still exists, and that is why I am asking you to consider these changes to help CT law enforcement work WITH the community, and better the atmosphere of trust for all of us.

Proposed House Bill 7285 recognizes that our police complaint process is broken, but it could go further to repair it. I therefore support the intention of Proposed House Bill 7285, but ask this committee to amend this bill so that its intent is fully realized. I think you should be aware of a survey by the ACLU of Connecticut that clearly shows that many Connecticut police agencies still make it difficult for members of the public to obtain information regarding complaint forms and processes easily. In some cases, this lack of transparency violates state law. In my town, Hartford, it took people longer to reach someone who could answer questions about the complaint process than any other jurisdiction. It is clear that we must amend H.B. 7285 to:

1. establish meaningful penalties for law enforcement agencies that do not comply with state complaint acceptance and investigation laws,
2. create a standardized complaint form that is compliant with best practices and translated into all commonly-spoken languages in Connecticut, and
3. require law enforcement agencies to track complaint data and to annually report specific complaint information to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

We simply must better the relations between the police and those they serve in their communities in Connecticut. We are among the most progressive and caring states in the Union. Let's lead the way in how people speak proudly and securely about our men and women in police uniform. Amending H.B. 7285 will go far in helping them move in the right direction in a powerful and meaningful way.

I urge the members of this committee to amend and support Proposed House Bill 7285.

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